

Standing up for Hertfordshire's countryside

Katie Smith
Planning and Development
Broxbourne Borough Council
Bishop's College
Churchgate
Cheshunt
EN8 9XQ

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

16th January 2019 (by email)

Dear Ms. Smith,

Application No. 07/18/1181/O

Outline application for construction of a high tech employment development in a parkland setting together with associated infrastructure comprising 1) A data centre facility (up to 65,000 sq m.) and associated ancillary plant storage and office space 2) Business space (up to 36,400 sq.m) reserved for B1/B2/B8 Use 3) Open space, landscaping and flood mitigation 4) Associated vehicular access from the A10 (Great Cambridge Road) And Lieutenant Ellis Way 5) Electricity Sub-Station. On Land at Maxwell's Farm West Great Cambridge Road, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire.

CPRE Hertfordshire oppose this proposal for inappropriate commercial development in the Green Belt contrary to the Green Belt policies in the National Planning Policy Framework and the current Broxbourne Local Plan on the grounds of prematurity.

This site sits within the Green Belt. In the emerging Local Plan, currently subject to Examination In Public, the Council propose removing it from the Green Belt, but that has not yet happened and there is opposition to it. Inset Map 1 of the emerging Local Plan shows the site removed from Green Belt designation, but it not allocated for any specific purpose, unlike the Park Plaza site to the south.

Under the criteria set down in paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework, if a proposed development is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area, then the development should be deemed premature.

This proposal is indeed substantial and would predetermine the subsequent use of this site. Consequently it should be withdrawn and considered once the Inspector has issued his findings on the Local Plan and that plan is adopted.

In his report in December 2011 on the Council's subsequently withdrawn Core Strategy, the Inspector raised the questions "*Is the Maxwells Farm West proposal justified? Will the*

mechanism for release from the green belt be effective? Can cumulative transport effects be mitigated satisfactorily? Is the proposal viable and deliverable?" These questions all remain to be answered by the findings of the current Examination in Public and are not comprehensively addressed in this application. Para 3.8 of the Planning Statement accompanying the application acknowledges that representations to have this type of development *"are currently under consideration by the inspector as part of the Local Plan process."*

The applicant recognises that in current circumstances the application represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt and sets out a series of Very Special Circumstances which they consider outweigh the resulting harm to the Green Belt. However, these are premised on the assumption that the site will be released for development prior to the conclusion of the Local Plan examination process.

Consequently, as it would be inappropriate for the Council to consider this application at the present time, we urge the Council to request the applicant to withdraw the application, or to suspend consideration of it until the findings of the EIP are known.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving